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MARITIME PREPOSITIONING FORCES (MPF) IN CENTRAL COMMAND IN THE
1990s: FORCE MULTIPLIER OR FORCE DIVIDER?

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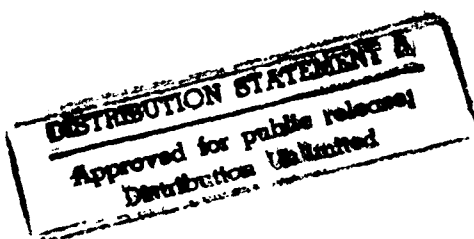
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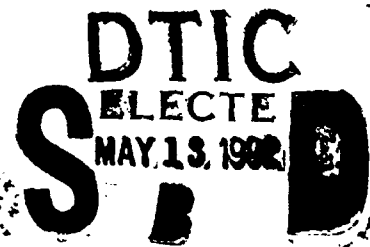
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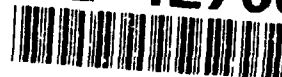
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**Abstract of
MARITIME PREPOSITIONING FORCES (MPF) IN CENTRAL COMMAND IN THE
1990s: FORCE MULTIPLIER OR FORCE DIVIDER?**

Maritime Prepositioning Forces (MPFs) are an effective and efficient means for Commander in Chief, Central Command (CINCCENT) to achieve national security and military strategy objectives in his area of operations (AOR) in the 1990s and beyond, provided they are properly deployed and employed. The MPF concept was validated during Desert Shield/Storm, as a complement to, not a substitute for, amphibious operations, providing the CINC expeditionary flexibility and employment sustainability. Post-Desert Storm force reductions, and political, military, and fiscal constraints, promise to put our Nation's future expeditionary flexibility in jeopardy. The future effective, efficient, and appropriate use of MPFs requires a thorough understanding of the MPF concept and doctrine, the enemy threat, mission requirements, capabilities and limitations of the forces, resources they need to accomplish the mission, and national interests. The strategy of a two-ship ARG/SPMAGTF/MPS combination, in the near term, in CENTCOM's AOR is feasible, but not suitable or acceptable because of its pernicious effects on operations. In this instance, it is a force divider, not a force multiplier.

PREFACE

Maritime Prepositioning Forces (MPF), validated during Desert Shield/Storm, are flexible, viable, efficient, and effective. As a complement to amphibious forces, they provide the nation expeditionary flexibility, economy of force, and strategic agility. The argument presented in this paper is not intended to castigate the concept or diminish the value or utility of the forces. Nor is it intended to criticize the United States Navy. Its purpose is to expose the effects of the primacy of organizational and programmatic bias over rational calculus in the choice of deployment options that are not in concert with the National Military Strategy. It also describes the influence of the choices on the "interpenetration" of the levels of conflict. The discussion of the capabilities and limitations of the forces is ancillary to this central issue, and does not detract from their worth. The value of the force is relative to the threat, the mission, and its deployment/employment in time and space.

I would like to express my appreciation to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Gerlaugh USMC, an expert on the subject, whose insight, knowledge, and candor were pivotal to this paper. I would also like to thank Major Thomas Hastings USMC for his penetrating understanding of the issues, his unselfish listening, and for sharing his ideas with me. Finally, I would like to thank Colonel (Sel) William R. Spain USMC for his guidance and advice.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAA.....Arrival and Assembly Area
 ACE.....Aviation Combat Element
 AOA.....Amphibious Objective Area
 AOR.....Area of Responsibility
 ATF.....Amphibious Task Force
 CAM.....Crisis Action Module
 CAS.....Crisis Action System
 CE.....Command Element
 CINC.....Commander-in-Chief
 CMPF.....Commander Maritime Prepositioning Force
 CSS.....Combat Service Support
 CSSE.....Combat Service Support Element
 DFM.....Deterrent Force Module
 FF.....Flight Ferry
 FIE.....Fly-in Echelon
 FOS.....Follow-on-Sustainment
 GCE.....Ground Command Element
 JCS.....Joint Chiefs of Staff
 JOPS.....Joint Operational Planning System
 LMCC.....Logistics and Movement Control Centers
 LOC.....Lines of Communication
 MAC.....Military Airlift Command
 MAGTF.....Marine Air-Ground Task Force
 MEB.....Marine Expeditionary Brigade
 MEF.....Marine Expeditionary Force
 MEU.....Marine Expeditionary Unit
 MPE/S.....Maritime Prepositioned Equipment and Supplies
 MPF.....Maritime Prepositioning Force
 MPS.....Maritime Prepositioning Ship
 MPSRON.....Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron
 NSE.....Naval Support Element
 OPP.....Off-load Preparation Party
 RBE.....Remain Behind Equipment
 ROE.....Rules of Engagement
 SLRP.....Survey, Liaison, and Reconnaissance Party
 T-AH.....Hospital Ship
 T-AVB.....Aviation Logistics Support Ship
 TPFDD.....Time Phased Force Deployment Data

GLOSSARY

Arrival and Assembly Area (AAA): An area designated by CMPF in coordination with the unified commander and host nation for arrival, off-load, and assembly of forces and MPE/S and preparations for subsequent operations. The AAA is administrative in nature and does not denote command of a geographic area. Such an area may be inside an AOA. Within the AAA, coordination authority for the following is implied for the CMPF:

- (a) Prioritization and use of airfield(s), port, beach facilities, and road networks
- (b) Air traffic control
- (c) Logistic support activities

Crisis Action Module (CAM): A group of combat, combat support, and combat service support forces, together with their appropriate non-unit-related personnel and accompanying supplies committed in response to a condition of social, political, or military instability.

Deterrent Force Module (DFM): Those forces available to the CINCs for the purpose of discouraging the commission of hostile acts. DFMs are linked together or uniquely identified so that they may be extracted from, or adjusted as an entity in, the TPFDD to enhance flexibility and usefulness of the operation plan during a crisis.

Fly-in Echelon (FIE): Airlifted forces and equipment of the MEB and NSE plus aircraft and personnel arriving in the flight ferry of the ACE.

Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB): A task organization which is normally built around a regimental landing team, a provisional Marine aircraft group, and a logistics support group. It is capable of conducting amphibious assault operations of a limited scope. During potential crisis situations, a MEB may be forward deployed afloat for an extended period in order to provide an immediate combat response.

Marine Expeditionary Force: The largest Marine air-ground task force, which is normally built around a division/wing team, but can include several divisions and aircraft wings, together with an appropriate combat service support organization. It is capable of conducting a wide range of amphibious assault operations and sustained operations ashore. It can be tailored for a wide variety of combat missions in any geographic environment.

Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU): A task organization which is normally built around a battalion landing team, reinforced aviation squadron, and logistic support unit. It fulfills routine forward afloat deployment situations, and is capable of relatively limited combat operations.

Maritime Prepositioned Equipment and Supplies (MPE/S): Unit equipment and sustaining supplies associated with a MEB and an NSE, which are deployed on maritime prepositioning ships.

Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF): A task organization of units under one commander formed for the purpose of introducing a Marine expeditionary brigade and its associated equipment and supplies into a secure area. The MPF is composed of a command element, an MPS squadron, a Marine expeditionary brigade, and a Navy support element.

Maritime Prepositioning Force Operation: A rapid deployment and assembly of a MEB in a secure area using a combination of strategic airlift and forward-deployed maritime prepositioning ships.

Maritime Prepositioning Ship(s) MPS: Civilian-crewed, Military Sealift Command chartered ships which are organized into three squadrons and usually forward deployed. These ships are loaded with prepositioned equipment and 30 days of supplies to support three MEBs.

MPF Independent Operation: An MPF operation which does not reinforce an amphibious operation.

MPF Reinforcement Operation: An MPF operation which reinforces an amphibious operation.

Navy Support Element (NSE): The MPF element that is composed of Naval beach group (NBG) staff and subordinate unit personnel, a detachment of Navy cargo handling force personnel, and other Navy components, as required. It is tasked with conducting the off-load and ship-to-shore movement of MPE/S.

Off-load Preparation Party (OPP): A task organization of Navy and Marine maintenance, embarkation, and cargo handling personnel deployed to the MPS squadron before or during its transit to the objective area to prepare the ship's off-load systems and embarked equipment for off-load.

Remain Behind Equipment (RBE): Unit equipment left by deploying forces at their bases when they deploy.

Survey, Liaison, and Reconnaissance Party (SLRP): A task organization formed from the MEB and NSE, which is introduced into the objective area prior to the arrival of the main body of the FIE to conduct initial reconnaissance, establish liaison with in-theater authorities, and initiate preparations for the arrival of the main body of the FIE and the MPSRON.

The advantages of time and place in all martial actions is half a victory, which being lost is irrecoverable.

Sir Francis Drake to Queen Elizabeth, 1588

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The ability to make a forcible entry cannot be overemphasized and is perhaps the most important point to be made. A nation may have the most formidable of forces with the most exquisite means of strategic mobility, but if the combination of the two cannot ensure successful entry except by invitation, the nation has only a reinforcement capability.

LtGen. Bernard E. Trainor USMC (Ret)

Purpose

This paper will examine the near-term peacetime utility of a two-ship Amphibious Ready Group (ARG)/Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF), Special Operations Capable (SOC), combined with one or more Maritime Prepositioning Ships (MPS), in Central Command's (CENTCOM's) Area of Operations (AOR). It will tie the Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) concept, as envisioned in the combination of "gray" and "black" bottom ships, to what Edward Luttwak called the interpenetration of the levels of war¹ from strategy to tactics. Its focus will be at the operational level of war.

Method

This paper will prophesy the nature of the threat in the AOR and the missions the Commander in Chief, CENTCOM (CINCCENT) might assign the force. Juxtaposed against the anticipated threats and missions, it will examine the capabilities and limitations of the MAGTFs contemplated for use with the two-ship ARG. It will explore the appropriateness of the force to the threat and mission. It will define the National Security and Military

Strategy objectives and analyze the deployment option vis a vis those objectives. It will survey lessons learned from Desert Shield/Desert Storm that are germane to the issue. Finally, it will reach conclusions about the proposed two-ship ARG, and make recommendations for the future integration of MPF and amphibious operations in the Middle Eastern theater. The common theme of the study will be the impact of decisions at different levels on the operational level and on the operational art of war, so it is fitting to define those terms, and to carry the definitions forward.

The operational level of war links the strategic and tactical levels. It is the use of tactical results to attain strategic objectives. The operational level includes deciding when, where, and under what conditions to engage the enemy in battle - and when, where, and under what conditions to refuse battle - with reference to higher aims.²

Activities at the operational level include sequencing events to achieve operational objectives and dedicating resources to advance and sustain those events. These activities guarantee the logistic support of tactical forces and yield the means by which tactical victories consummate in the attainment of strategic objectives.³

The operational art. . . requires broad vision, the ability to anticipate, a careful understanding of the relationship of means to ends, and effective joint and combined cooperation. Reduced to its essentials, operational art requires the commander to answer three questions: (1) What military conditions must be produced in the theater of war or operations to achieve the strategic goal? (2) What sequence of actions is most likely to produce that

condition? (3) How should the resources of the force be applied to accomplish that sequence of actions.⁴

Concept

MPFs consist of a Command Element (CE), a Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF), an Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron (MPSRON), and a Navy Support Element (NSE).

The operations consist of the use of equipment and supplies prepositioned aboard forward deployed Maritime Prepositioning Ships (MPS) and a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), along with a Navy Support Element (NSE), that are airlifted by Military Airlift Command (MAC) into an Arrival and Assembly Area (AAA) to assemble with their equipment in preparation for operations ashore.⁵

MPFs are a strategic deployment option. However, "deployment is not the objective; it is a means to an end. The MAGTF mission should dictate what is to be deployed and how."⁶ MPFs provide the CINC deployment flexibility. MPF operations derive from the maritime strategy and are an integral component of the National Military Strategy, including global presence in peacetime and crisis control during conflict.

The purpose of MPF operations is the rapid establishment of a MAGTF ashore, ready to conduct combat operations. There are two types of MPF operations: reinforcement (of amphibious operations), and independent (all others). MPFs provide rapid response (10 days), global capability, and sustainability (30 days) to the CINC. While there are only two types of MPFs, there are a myriad of options of MPFs, MAGTFs, and NSEs tailored to a wide range of contingencies. These are reflected in the CAMs and

DFMs built for the CINCs. Furthermore, there is inherent flexibility in the MAGTFs which can be tailored in size and capability. Deployed and employed properly, Maritime Prepositioning Forces are a force multiplier.

History

The MPF Program was begun in 1979 during the Carter Administration. It was intended to be a deployment option, designed to alleviate shortfalls in strategic lift. General Barrow, then Commandant of the Marine Corps, stifled debate within the Corps which was divided over the usefulness of the MPF and its perceived threat to the amphibious mission. General Barrow "saw it as 'both-and,' rather than 'either-or,' and events [so far] have proven him right."⁷

By 1983, the Military Sealift Command (MSC) had leased thirteen ships and formed them into three squadrons in support of the concept. In 1986, the squadrons became operational. Between 1986 and the Gulf War, MPF exercises evolved in scope and complexity. Innovative variations of the basic concept, Deterrent Force Modules (DFMS) and Crisis Action Modules (CAMs), promise to enhance the flexibility of MPF operations and improve MAGTF force closure and ready-to-operate times in the future through the development of combat capability sets, selective offloading, and MPS secondary roles.⁸

In the wake of Desert Shield/Desert Storm, CINCCENT requested a substantial naval presence in the Persian Gulf. The Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations,

concerned about restoring Operations and Personnel Tempo (OPS/PERS TEMPO)⁹, proposed deployment of a two-ship ARG/MAGTF (SOC), from the west coast, with one or more MPSs attached. The challenge to support the CINC resurrected the old debate that General Barrow had settled a decade ago. But it is more instructive in its illustration of the formidable complexity of "balancing imperatives - both those derived through rational calculation and those imposed by organizational necessity - to produce meaningful designs for war."¹⁰ Furthermore, it reveals the "interpenetration of levels" of decisionmaking in the process of balancing imperatives. "Long range naval planning does not deal with future decisions, but with the future of present decisions."¹¹ Decisions like the one under study, to deploy a two-ship ARG/MAGTF/MPS to the Persian Gulf in the near term, impact at the national level, where policy originates and strategy is conceived. Their reverberation may determine whether we maintain a forcible entry capability or a reinforcement capability in the future.

CHAPTER II

THREAT

I am the friend of the Ingliz [the English], their ally. But I will walk with them only as far as my religion and honor will permit.

Ibn Saud, Founder of Saudi Arabia

General

Regional crises will be the primary focus of effort of conflicts in the future. If history serves as a gauge of the validity of that prediction, the Middle East will be the location of the majority of the conflicts in the future. Between 1966 and 1975, American military action in the Middle East increased by 32%, and between 1975 and the Gulf War, American military actions in the region accounted for more than 50% of worldwide U. S. uses of armed forces.¹ The Middle East will remain a locus for future instability and conflict because of religious fanaticism, the Arab-Israeli issue, water rights, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, border disputes, the absence of Soviet support, and the impacts of the war on the regional balance of power.

The United States will be compelled to defend its strategic, economic, and political interests in the Middle East in the future. In the midst of uncertainty, three certainties about the future of the region exist: 1) The US will defend Israel; 2) The US will intervene to maintain the flow of oil; and 3) The US will intervene to protect American citizens.

Mirror Imaging and Wishful Thinking

United States' naivete in dealing with Middle Eastern countries causes us to underestimate our enemies and overestimate our friends in the region. Violence is a legacy of tribal culture, of what David Pryce Jones in his book, The Closed Circle called "power-challenge dialectic," and "shame-honor ranking." With the end of the Cold War, the latent power-challenge dialectic was awakened in the person of Saddam Hussein who calculated that he could play the game without the imposition of superpower shackles. He miscalculated, but the video replay will help future players like Iran, Iraq, Libya, or Syria to make the correct call.

"Nation building," "confidence building," and "peacetime engagement," features of the National Military Strategy, cannot be executed in the Middle East in the same way that they might be applied in other areas of the world. "Secretary of State James Baker was right when he emphasized the need to approach the region's problems with 'a due sense of modesty.'"² Despite the fact that Saddam Hussein was soundly thrashed during the Gulf War, millions of Arabs will treat those who allied themselves with the West, whom they were taught to revile, as tainted by that association.³

The majority of Middle Easterners, although they might have been privately pleased that the coalition defeated Saddam, took no joy in the humiliation he suffered which they felt to be an extension of their own continuing humiliation by the West. "The

most powerful political motivation in the present-day Arab world is the desire to redeem the century of humiliation at the hands of the West."⁴

Translated into policy this implies a discreet and discriminating presence in the region.

Depending on the interests at stake, either such entry into the Middle East should be avoided altogether for the sake of the shame-based hostility it will trigger, or it must be undertaken with inflexible determination to use whatever degree of force is required for supreme arbitration.⁵

The fact that employment of the armed forces for political purposes has most often been successful when the U.S. objective has been to reinforce rather than modify behavior of the target state⁶ would tend to corroborate that theory. The combination of gray and black bottom ships is contrary to discreet presence since the deployment-employment option requires ports/airfields and is escalatory in nature. Furthermore, it is inconsistent with "overwhelming force" called for in the National Military Strategy, and would be better described as flexible indetermination than "inflexible determination." The Washington Institute for Near East Policy reached a similar conclusion.

It would be best to focus on low-key methods of enhancing deployment capabilities, because a large, visible U.S. presence may undermine the legitimacy of traditional regimes and make it costly and more difficult politically for the United States to maintain that force in the Persian Gulf.⁷

To follow through on one of the U.S. objectives of the Gulf War, the U.S. presence needs to be enhanced in the region.

Nevertheless, the profile of U.S. presence must be linked to regional realities. Elevated U.S. credibility in the region, culminating in our desert victory, allows us a greater degree of prudence in the near term, to maintain a low profile without sacrificing deterrence. In the absence of an imminent threat or formal written agreements, and with the peace process hanging in the balance, the best way to do that is to remain over the horizon with a credible force. It calls for a careful symmetry between an unambiguous international commitment to respond automatically to unilateral quests for regional hegemony, and an ambiguous, unprovocative U.S. presence ready to do the same, in concert with, or in place of, the international response. The ambiguity of the U.S. force should be of the Israeli variety - the proportionality of the response rather than the response itself left to doubt.

Arms Proliferation

By the year 2000, in addition to Israel, Iraq and Iran will likely have nuclear capability. The proliferation of chemical and biological weapons and delivery systems by the countries of the Middle East is reflected at Appendix A. The prospects for the future are more countries with more weapons that are more accurate, more lethal, with more range. The continuing saga of Iraq's nuclear program is matched by Iran's accelerated efforts to procure nuclear technology. The emigration of former Soviet nuclear scientists to the Middle East is viewed in the West with extreme concern. Nevertheless, even if their emigration is

curtailed, the North Koreans and Chinese are sympathetic salesmen, and organic development will suffice in many countries.

At least six Middle Eastern countries have chemical weapons; four have used them. At least five countries have, or are working on, biological weapons. In 1988, Rafsanjani, then Speaker of the Iranian Parliament and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, dispelled any delusions the West might harbor about Iranian self-restraint:

Chemical and biological weapons are poor man's atomic bombs and can easily be produced. We should at least consider them for our defense . . . international laws are only drops of ink on paper.⁸

Unfortunately, Rafsanjani is now in a position to make policy. The use of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons in the Near Eastern environment causes grievous effects on operations because of the heat (operating in MOPP IV for extended periods of time would cause extensive casualties), and the need for massive amounts of water in the decontamination process. An airfield or port contaminated with persistent chemical agents would severely reduce its ability to accomplish its mission. Ports and airfields serving as entry points for U.S. forces are lucrative targets which should not be used if there are other means available to deploy U.S. forces.

The prospects for arms control in the Middle East are grim. Although our policy should continue to attempt to reduce arms and technology proliferation in the region through diplomatic means,

there is the potential for the U. S. to use military force to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region before countries have the capability to use the weapons. This requires speed of execution, overwhelming force, and surprise. If we permit countries to acquire the weapons, then credible deterrence and ambiguity of intent become essential - the kinds of advantages offered by a credible force over the horizon unimpeded by requirements for ports, airfields, or infrastructure.⁹

Terrorism

Despite the frenzied proliferation of conventional and unconventional arms in the Middle East, and notwithstanding the Muslim itch for martyrdom, the overwhelming defeat of Saddam Hussein by the awesome military machine of the United States presages the reemergence of terrorism as a strategy and a tactic of enemies of the United States in the region. Both conventional and unconventional weapons can be used effectively in its application. Terrorism, particularly the state-sponsored or international varieties, could easily be justified to protect Arabic/Islamic ethnicity, culture, religion, or identity from the impingement of Western values.

Terrorism is not new to the Near East. The sicarii, active in the Zealot struggle in Palestine in the 1st Century AD, killed people in the crowded streets of Jerusalem, and when asked who committed the act replied, "Non est inventus."¹⁰ In an instance where the present imitates the past, the bewilderment and bedlam

following the act and the difficulty of an appropriate and correct response, continue to plague policy makers and strategists to this day. Denial of the act is especially troublesome, and state-sponsored terrorism coupled with "taqiya" (lying), where we are lulled into a policy, strategy, or operation which places our armed forces in a position where they are targets for terrorists is loathsome and vexatious. Ports and airfields required by MPSs and FIEs provide such targets, especially where the main force is split, and the host nation restricts ROEs and security measures which would otherwise protect the force.

The mere fact of settlement talks between the Arabs and Israelis has the potential to foment a rash of terrorist acts in the region. There will be a competition between powers in the region to enlist terrorist groups, just as they vie for weapons. The terrorist groups will be pressured to answer the beck and call of the country by which they are sustained; nevertheless, that country will not be able to guarantee its own control over the terrorists. The forces of countries like the United States, that forward deploy forces to counter terrorism, may find those forces victims of terrorism unless that force is capable, yet discreet and secure.

Islamic Fundamentalism

Fundamentalism is a threat to regional stability that should not be exaggerated but cannot be ignored. The irony of the rise of fundamentalism, as we are witnessing it in Algeria, Tunisia,

Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, is its legitimacy, rising as it does through democratic processes, while its leaders disdain democracy. In a further twist of irony, the fundamentalists, once in power, intend to use the instruments of power to force their beliefs on others, while the governments in power intend to use the instruments of power to prevent the Islamic fundamentalists from gaining power.

The fundamentalist movements in the region that are militant and universalist, transnational Islamicists like the Muslim Brotherhood, pose the greatest danger to regional stability. The fundamentalists and secularists are bound for battle in the future. The Fundamentalists' influence makes Middle Eastern governments more wary of intrusive U.S. presence in their countries, to include military exercises, prepositioning, and certainly the use of ports and airfields for MPFs. In the short term, it would be more prudent to avoid the MPF link initially; in the long term, if our interests are at stake, we must use overwhelming force to defeat enemies that threaten them. In the short term, a failed employment of force due to a maldeployment, could provide the catalyst for future American isolationism and ultimately impotence in the region.

If the United States is so aggressive in its post-war policy in the Middle East that individual leaders have to walk with us beyond the point that their religion and honor permit, that policy serves instability and war, not stability and peace. The use of the MPF as an instrument of policy in the present

situation might serve to provoke war rather than prevent it, a result which would be anathema to policy and should be avoided.

CHAPTER III

MISSION

If a man does not know to what port
he is steering, no wind is favorable.

Seneca 4 B.C.-65 A.D.

The consternation among the services and other CINCs over the mission in the Persian Gulf was a red herring. According to the National Security Strategy, the most likely missions military forces will be assigned in the future are:

- * Presence/Deterrence
- * Disaster Relief
- * Humanitarian Assistance
- * Surveillance
- * Freedom of Navigation
- * Regional Crisis
- * Show of Force
- * Punitive Strike
- * Armed Intervention
- * Regional Conflict
- * Regional Chemical War
- * Regional Nuclear War

The interests and objectives of national policy as they apply to the Middle East were identified in the National Security Strategy as follows:

- * Maintaining a Free Flow of Oil
- * Curbing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Ballistic Missiles
- * Countering Terrorism
- * Iraq's Complete and Unconditional Compliance With All UN Resolutions
- * Relief and Protection of Refugees
- * Promoting Stability and Security of Our Friends
- * Regional Security Agreements
- * Confidence Building
- * Economic Reconstruction and Recovery
- * Greater Political Participation
- * Respect for Human Rights
- * Monitor Libyan Behavior

- * Comprehensive Peace and Reconciliation Between Israel and the Arab States and Between Israel and Palestine
- * Remaining Open to Improved Relationship With Iran; However, No Terrorism¹

The policy statement identified four means to achieve those ends: (1) strategic deterrence, (2) forward presence, (3) crisis response, and (4) reconstitution. For the purposes of this study, maritime prepositioning and amphibious forces' missions would be categorized under (1), (2), or (3).

Assuming that the military instrument of national power is chosen over, or in addition to, the political, economic, or informational instruments, the most probable level of conflict in the near term is low intensity conflict (LIC). The roles and missions assigned forces in LIC are reflected at Appendix B.

MEU (SOC) and Maritime Special Purpose Force (MSPF) missions are listed at Appendix C. In addition to the missions described in the National Security Strategy and those implied from the threat, there was also the continuing embargo against Iraq. The mission was as clear and specific as it could be, given the unpredictability of the Middle East. Although it would have been helpful for the CINC to prioritize the missions according to the probability of their occurrence, the clamor over mission had more to do with the Navy's predisposal with Op/Pers Tempo and things and numbers of things, despite the threat or mission requirements. If a man chooses not to steer to his port of destination, but to another port because the winds favor that

course, we are dealing with an irrational will, not a lack of knowledge.

CHAPTER IV

FORCE CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS

Philosophically, it's critical to distinguish between 'capabilities' . . . and 'things.' In the Marine Corps, we have chosen to focus on 'capabilities'- those specific functions that we can offer the national military arsenal. Naturally, we'll need 'things' to function what it is we need to do and then focus on the 'things' that will provide us the capabilities we need to do it with.

General Carl E. Mundy Jr.
Commandant of the Marine Corps

Marine Air-Ground Task Force

The United States Marine Corps has made bold efforts to improve the capabilities of their MAGTFs and increase their flexibility and speed. The Corps has accomplished this through quality leadership, rigorous and realistic training, and a building-block approach to deployment and employment (CAMs/DFMs). The Crisis Action Modules enhance the sequential flow of forces into the AOR. They exploit the strategic deployment capabilities: airlift, sealift, and maritime prepositioning ships. The MAGTFs' wholeness, self-sustainment, and synergy provide the CINCs with a razor-sharp expeditionary force ready to fight. Their composition and capabilities are a perfect fit for the missions identified in Central Command's AOR. However, the capabilities of the forces and exploitation of strategic deployment must be linked to the threat and mission.

Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF)

SPMAGTFs are smaller than MEUs and are organized to accomplish missions not appropriate for MEUs. Because they are

small and task-organized, there is nothing specific in MAGTF doctrine which quantifies or lists their capabilities or limitations. They possess, at a minimum, the capabilities common to all MAGTFs, regardless of size:

- * Enter and Exit a Battle Area at Night Under Adverse Weather Conditions, From Over the Horizon, Under EMCON, by Surface or Air
- * Identify, Locate, and Fix the Enemy
- * Reconnaissance and Surveillance
- * Engage, Kill, or Capture the Enemy in All Environments and Under All Conditions Including NBC
- * Plan and Commence Execution within 6 Hours of Receipt of the Warning Order
- * Provide Sea-based Sustainment¹

They are versatile. SPMAGTFs include mobile training teams, security assistance teams, and small independent action forces. They can conduct surveillance and reconnaissance, counternarcotics operations, and limited strike and raid operations. Their special operations capability will vary with their composition and training. Their limitations are relative to the threat and their mission, but for purposes of this study, their most critical limitation is their size and lack of enabling power.

SPMAGTFs are fig-leaf forces at the lower end of the presence mission spectrum. A SPMAGTF is not a MEU and does not possess the capabilities of a MEU. In the present scenario, elements of the MEU would be forward-deployed aboard amphibious shipping. Their equipment and supplies would be aboard a MPS. Elements of the MEU, the FIE, would remain behind in the States on alert and would link up with the MAGTF and MPS on call. The

MEU, with the capabilities listed at Appendix C, would be formed and ready after the link up. Prior to that time, the capabilities of the force forward-deployed would depend upon their exact composition, but would be less than a MEU, and possibly greater than a SPMAGTF.

The capabilities of a SPMAGTF reside in the MEU since a SPMAGTF can be formed from a MEU, but not all of the capabilities of a MEU reside in the SPMAGTF. A SPMAGTF has less ability to project power, less firepower, and less staying power than a MEU. A MEU cannot be grown organically from within the SPMAGTF.

Marine Expeditionary Unit Special Operations Capable (MEU SOC)

"The MEU is forward-deployed as the immediately responsive, on-scene, sea-based Marine component of the fleet commander's amphibious and power projection forces."² Although it can not conduct assaults, the MEU can serve as the forward element of a MEB and is well-suited for limited operations. It is self sustaining for at least 15 days in most amphibious and contingency operations. Perhaps its most important capability is to conduct quick reaction (6 hour notice), long-range amphibious raids, at night, in EMCON, under adverse conditions. The missions, capabilities, and limitations of a MEU are listed at Appendix C. In terms of sequencing and enabling follow-on forces, depending on the threat, the MEU has a trip-wire capability. But a trip wire is more capable than a fig leaf, and given the threat and missions in the Middle East, an autonomous MEU (SOC) is the force of choice.

Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF)

The capabilities and limitations of the MPF are at Appendix D. The CNO's proposed module includes an MPS to reduce the numbers of amphibious ships in the ARG, thus reducing the capabilities of the force. The threat and mission indicate that inclusion of the MPF is inappropriate in the near term because of the division of the force, the corresponding reduction in its capabilities, and the political sensitivities of the region in the aftermath of the war. Use of the MPF initially in this instance would reduce options and flexibility rather than enhance those attributes which are normally associated with the deployment option. Use of the forward-deployed afloat MEU (SOC) offers the advantages of time and space which are forfeited by the use of the MPF to round out the SPMAGTF.

Maldeployment and Risk

The key to avoiding maldeployment or malemployment is to ensure that the capabilities of the force are equal to or greater than the requirements of the mission projected for the force. General Al Gray, former Commandant of the Marine Corps, defined the difference between the two as risk, and the probability of the risk increasing is spontaneous when the force we plan for is more capable than the one actually existing at the time and place it is required.

The foremost advantage of employing naval forces in regional conflict during crisis is time. The second is force. It does not make sense to sacrifice time and split the force, to give up

the greatest benefits you enjoy, through self-imposed constraints which dictate a deployment option which minimizes your employment capabilities.³ Have deployment decisions nothing to do with the nature of the threat, the requirements of the mission, and the capabilities of the force to meet those requirements? The argument against splitting the MEU starts to look more and more like an argument in defense of maintaining our amphibious capability, since the two-ship ARG precedent, whether intentionally or unintentionally, hazards that employment capability. It is worth the effort to touch tangentially on the capabilities of amphibious forces, articulated so eloquently by B. H. Liddell Hart more than thirty years ago, and still valid.

Amphibious Forces

Liddell Hart espoused the strategic value, and the distracting and bypassing power - "the ability to vary the thrust point while keeping the enemy on the stretch" - of amphibious flexibility. He spoke of the synergistic effects produced by sea power plus amphibious flexibility, and their "vital subtraction from the concentration" of the enemy forces. It is the threat of the employment of amphibious forces which created the desired effects, and not always their use, though the capability is a prerequisite to the potential threat. Liddell Hart identified the Marine Corps as the "spearhead force," with its combined arms capability for "timely effect," as the force of choice in the initial phase of battle. In so doing, he unwittingly endorsed the concepts of sequencing and enabling. He recognized

amphibious forces as a credible deterrent with fewer of the limitations and restraints of other forces, particularly those of a political nature. He lauded their flexibility, mobility, versatility, reliability, reversibility, economy, autonomy, simplicity, speed, and power. Finally, he said, "Amphibious flexibility is the greatest strategic asset that a sea-based power possesses."⁴ By splitting the MEU, we handicap ourselves and discount our amphibious/expeditionary flexibility.

CHAPTER V

STRATEGY

It is of no use to get there first
unless, when the enemy arrives, you have
also the most men.

Mahan, Lessons of the War With Spain, 1899

National Security and Military Strategy

President Bush's aspiration for a "New World Order," born of the death of Communism, provided the foundation for a policy to replace containment. The objectives and missions of the strategy were covered in the previous chapter. The means of achieving the policy objectives are worth repeating: forward presence, deterrence, and crisis response.

Forward Presence

Presence missions are meant to deter aggression, preserve regional balances, deflect arms races, and prevent power vacuums. They also cement alliances and signal that our commitments are backed by action.¹ The National Security Strategy specifically called for

some measure of continuing presence [in the Middle East] consistent with the desires and needs of our friends. We will work with our friends to bolster confidence and security through such measures as exercises, prepositioning of heavy equipment, and an enhanced naval presence.²

CINCCENT was asking for nothing more than the National Security Strategy had already mandated.

The policy marked regional crises as the predominant military threat, and indicated that their demands, as well as the requirements of forward presence will determine the size and structure of the future forces of the United States.

The ability to project our power will underpin our strategy more than ever. We must be able to deploy substantial forces and sustain them in parts of the world where prepositioning equipment will not always be feasible, where adequate bases may not be available (at least before a crisis) and where there is a less developed industrial base and infrastructure to support our forces once they have arrived.³

Applying the policy to the ARG/MAGTF mix in the Persian Gulf, the CJCS decreed a continuous presence of an ARG/MAGTF. Webster defines presence as "the fact or condition of being present," and present as "being in view or at hand."⁴ The Navy decided, in effect, by their choice of ARG/MAGTF/MPS mix, to split the force; therefore, the force that will actually be present in the Persian Gulf will not be the force the CJCS ordered, but a smaller force less capable. The whole force would not exist until the arrival of the fly-in echelon (FIE). In spirit at least, this seems contrary to the implicit preference for self-sustaining forces and a power-projection capability in places like those described in the passage, whose description fits the Middle East.

Eliminating the choice of visible presence through the choice of a deployment option that necessitates it, on the ground, nullifies the benefits of logistic self-sufficiency and immunity from political constraints, typically enjoyed by naval

forces. There is a fine line between deterrence and provocation, and a visible presence on the ground in the Middle East could cross that line, place the force in danger, and inhibit future U.S. regional access and influence.

Deterrence

The draft document calls for flexible forces and places a premium on efficiency without sacrificing effectiveness. It defines the national military objectives, which include, inter alia:

- * Deter or Defeat Aggression in Concert With Allies
- * Ensure Global Access and Influence
- * Promote Regional Stability and Cooperation
- * Combat Terrorism

The purpose of forward deployment of naval forces is deterrence. Credible conventional deterrence relies upon our capabilities to sustain credible forward presence in vital regions and to defeat or reverse an adversary's conventional attacks.⁵ Deterrence, born of forward presence of a credible force in peacetime, and a timely response in crisis and war, is lessened simply by splitting the force, thereby reducing the threat of violence and the capability to apply it.

Deterrence is in the eye of the beholder; nevertheless, "black bottoms" in and of themselves, are a less credible deterrent than "gray bottoms." In fact, because of MPS' vulnerability to attack, it would not be wise to bring them into the AOR until absolutely necessary, in which case they would have no deterrent value at all, at least until their introduction into the AOR. Then, their very presence would inform the enemy of our impending landing at nearby

airfields and ports. The two-ship ARG would not possess a credible forcible entry capability, lessening its deterrent value.

"Deterrence . . . does not exist in abstract isolation; it arises from a hypothesis, however conditional or remote, of actual use."⁶ The capability of the force must equal its intended use, or it is not really a deterrent, at least from the perspective of the target of its intended use. If we intend to use a MEU (SOC), for example, in the Persian Gulf, whatever deterrent that a MEU equates to exists to a lesser degree until the MEU is whole. The 'wholeness' of the force in this case is tied to the FIE.

Escalation, built into the deployment option, is not conducive to deterrence, and is ominous in light of Clausewitz's assertion that war tends toward the absolute and the plausible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East in the future. At the very least, the Navy will lose or lessen all five of its "enduring attributes": mobility and flexibility, political availability, diversity of capability, calculated ambiguity of intent, and escalation control.⁷

Ground-based forces tend to show extremely strong resolve but are vulnerable to unwanted involvement and the possibility of escalatory confrontation. Furthermore, such escalation, once set in motion, is particularly difficult to back away from . . . One must also consider whether the presence force is prepositioned or projected into the crisis. The introduction of new forces into an already existing crisis tends to be highly provocative . . .⁸

Crisis Response

"Deterrence and crisis response dictate that we maintain a

force that can respond quickly, prepared to fight on arrival."⁹ Readiness is relative. A force forward-deployed afloat is more ready to fight than one that relies on forward deployment plus airlift and maritime prepositioning.

In terms of crisis response, the two-ship ARG and MPS offer a limited response in the Persian Gulf, while reducing force responsiveness in the Pacific. The 'swing' concept may or may not be the answer to crisis response in the long term, but simultaneous crises in the short term should not be the prerequisite for proof either way, at least not for the sake of Ops/Pers tempo.

Maritime Superiority

Maritime superiority is one of the strategic concepts that is essential to achieve National policy and strategy objectives. In peace, it reinforces deterrence and responds to crises; in war, it is pivotal to operations and war termination.¹⁰ There is another advantage to maritime superiority, best summed up by Francis Bacon - "He that commands the sea is at great liberty, and may take as much or as little of the war as he will." The two-ship ARG/MAGTF/MPF mix will compel the commander to take more of the war than he wants, because he will be forced to use the port/airfield in order to unify and concentrate his force; or, less of the war than he wants because he finds himself unable to enter forcibly the port/airfield or conduct (or credibly threaten to conduct) an amphibious landing. The division of his force

diminishes his maritime superiority and in diminishing it, places it in jeopardy.

Strategic Agility

The MPF certainly offers the National Command Authority (NCA) strategic agility, but that agility must be assessed relative to time and space. Strategic agility means that "the force needed to win is assembled by the rapid movement of forces from wherever they are to wherever they are needed."¹¹ If the force needed to win is already forward-deployed afloat, it would take less time to respond to crisis and would require less space since it would not be tied to ports or airfields. Agility applies to employment as well as deployment.

Power projection implies force, and forcible entry is not one of the capabilities of the MPF. Forward-deployed forces afloat must be capable of accomplishing the mission alone initially. Agility is worthless without power projection. The need for power projection becomes even more critical with the reduction of overseas bases and regional orientation.¹²

If forcible entry is required, Naval forces can strike and seize points of access for follow-on forces. They are indispensable as covering forces, especially when augmented by support forces such as the MPS which can marry up with air-landed Marines. The use of land-based tactical air units and army airborne insertion forces expands force projection capabilities, and takes advantage of their unique talents. If unopposed insertion is possible, then the forcible entry phase can be bypassed or quickly terminated, or amphibious and air-landed combat power can concentrate rapidly. If these efforts alone don't terminate the conflict, the stage is set for decisive action by joint forces.¹³

The capability to conduct forcible entry is assumed as a method to project power. This is done with amphibious forces. Maritime prepositioning provides a complementary capability whose real value lies in its ability to introduce forces and their equipment sequentially into the theater of operations.

Sequencing plays an important role in strategic agility and power projection, as indeed it does in the Marines' warfighting doctrine across the spectrum of conflict (See Figure 1).

The concept of 'sequencing' is comparative advantage and complementarity at work in the area of force planning and employment, because it maximizes the capabilities of different types of forces at different points across the spectrum of intervention, from stability operations and presence to full scale sustained operations on land.¹⁴

But the whole idea of sequencing is perverted with the creation of a MEU (SOC) that is split between gray bottom and black bottom ships, and a FIE. Sequencing and enabling are tandem concepts. Forward-deployed Marines, prepared to conduct stability operations and crisis response, begin the sequence as enablers. It is oxymoronic to split them, since by so doing their capacity as enablers is lessened or eliminated - the enabling force is disabled.

The combination in question assumes that the Marines can forcibly enter with a two ship ARG and simultaneously surge by conducting MPF operations to link up and unify the MEU - then accomplish the mission. In becoming strategically agile, the force sacrifices unit integrity, speed, concentration, surprise, unity of command, and readiness. It becomes operationally

JOINT FORCE SEQUENCING FOR MARITIME PRESENCE AND POWER PROJECTION

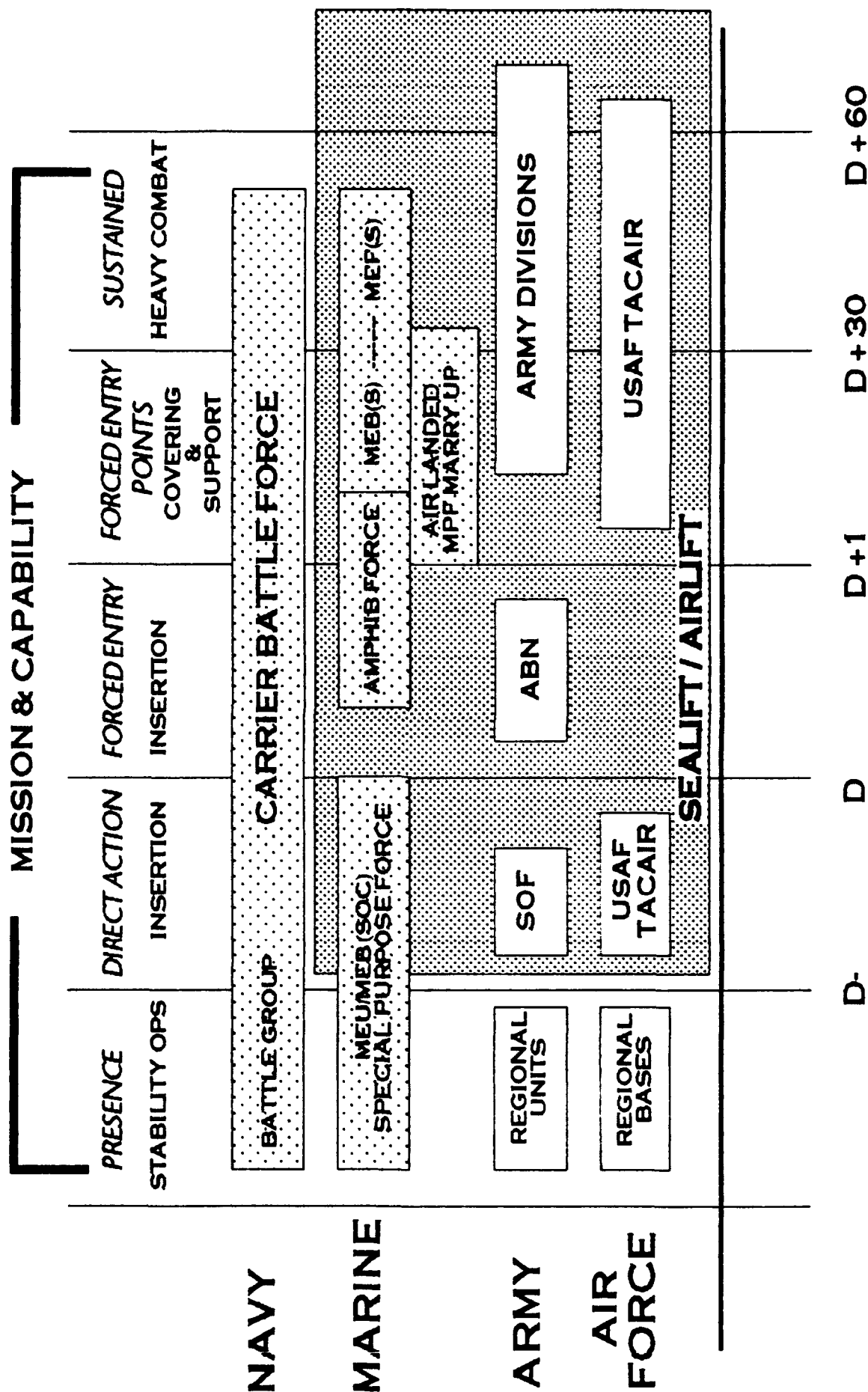


FIGURE 1

ungraceful. Strategic agility suggests deployment options which gain an employment advantage over the enemy in time and space. Clausewitz warned against postponement of action in time and space to a point where further waiting would bring disadvantage. At that point, the policy benefit would be exhausted. If the force present is not equal to the action contemplated and has to wait for reinforcement past the optimum time for action, the benefit of strategic agility is lost, and the force in place could reach its "culminating point of victory" upon landing. The proposed ARG/MAGTF/MPS transposes the action into an interval of delay, a shadow of time and space, during which the decisive moment in time and space could pass us by.

Instead of focusing our efforts on critical enemy vulnerabilities, this option will compel us, justifiably, to worry about our own. It will embrace the defense rather than the offense, and pull the enemy combat power through our gaps rather than pull our combat power through his gaps. Putting a black bottom with a gray bottom is inimical to shaping the action in time and space, since it extends time (waiting for the FIE), reduces space (to available ports/airfields/beaches), and limits options too long before we know the nature of the threat and the requirements of the mission.

Our MPF are strategically agile, but if their sequencing is inept, if they are not enabling or enhancing, if they are a substitute for amphibious forces when they should complement them, or if their use reduces sustainability rather than

increases it, then they can become operationally clumsy even if they are strategically agile. "As numbers drop, the risk of maldeployment increases. Should crises coincide, effective naval response will be more difficult, and gaps and power vacuums could result."¹⁵

Naval Strategy

Among the enduring attributes of naval forces are:

- * Mobility and Flexibility
- * Diversity of Capability
- * Calculated Ambiguity of Intent
- * Escalation Control

The two-ship ARG/MAGTF/MPS in the near term diminishes mobility because forces are limited to littoral areas close to the ports and airfields needed for reinforcement. It increases our flexibility to the point of ineffectiveness and lack of control. The split MEU detracts from our ability to control changing circumstances, as Sun Tzu called them, by reducing our chances of achieving immediate results. These are some of the operational byproducts of the choice of a strategic deployment option that assumes a benign environment and allied support, and implicitly causes us to disperse our force at the moment we wish to concentrate it - to protect itself and seize the advantage over the enemy and accomplish the mission.

Where is the diversity of capability in the proposed combination? The force has been reduced in size and capability, constrained in time and space. Combinations of things have no intrinsic value. Their value is relative to the threat and mission, deployment and employment, time and space. The fact

that we can combine black and gray bottom ships does not suggest that we should, without regard for those factors. Diversity of capability can be a double-edged sword.

Calculated ambiguity of intent and escalation control are lost with the two-ship ARG/MAGTF/MPS mix in the present scenario. The uncertainty of the nature of the force, normally an advantage of the MPF, actually becomes a certainty, thus a disadvantage. Once the FIE arrives, the force will be about as ambiguous as a trout in your milk. With the afloat prepositioned force alone, our will lay in its very presence. With the divided force, the gauge of our will is measured largely by the introduction of the FIE, despite the fact that its introduction may in itself be an inflated measure of our will. By seizing the military initiative, we may forfeit the political initiative, and put the force at risk. The escalatory nature of the force projected into the AOR cannot be mistaken. The only degree of escalation control in the present proposal would come after we initiated the escalation. In view of the threat, the escalation threshold in the region is low anyway and argues against the proposed ARG/MAGTF/MPS blend.

The "Base Force" and Jointness

Choices like the CNO's are driven by the paradoxical language and action of policy as it relates to the "base force." The "base force" is the minimum acceptable force, determined to be 25% smaller than the present force. Common sense dictates that, in peacetime,

We must balance our commitments with our s and, above all, we must wisely choose now which elements of our strength will best serve our needs in the future.¹⁶

In practice however, each branch of the service received their "fair share" cut of 25%. The "base force" ordained capabilities planning (assets oriented) over requirements planning (threat oriented), and increased the risk which is measured by the difference between the two; the gray/black bottom mix is a case in point.

The National Security and Military Strategy finally asserts that the coherence of the strategy can result only from joint cooperation. "Divided, we will invite disasters. United, we can overcome any challenges."¹⁷ Notwithstanding the prudence or imprudence of the Navy's decision in the case under study, the trickle-down effect of the failure to make hard choices at the national level is contrary to unity and joint cooperation at lower levels, as witnessed by the CINC-CINC, CINC-service, and service-service antagonisms associated with the relatively minor challenge of placing an appropriate force in the Persian Gulf. As it stands now, we may get there first, but when the enemy arrives, we may not have the most men.

CHAPTER VI

DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM

We don't want to move too far away from the need for forcible entry . . . Saudi Arabia-we were invited in. We were able to make great use of our maritime prepositioning ships and our amphibious capability. It was our amphibious capability, with its forcible entry that tied down several Iraqi divisions along the coast. It was the amphibious capability which was the commander's strategic reserve and a force of decisive capability.

General Al Gray, Former Commandant of the Marine Corps

Lessons Learned

The Maritime Prepositioning Force concept as a deployment option was validated during Desert Shield/Storm, as was the distraction and subtraction value of the threat of amphibious operations and expeditionary flexibility. Of ten Gulf War military lessons learned published by the CSIS Study Group, three related to the need to maintain and support amphibious assault capabilities and sufficient expeditionary forces.¹ The success of the MPF during the war was best expressed by General Joseph P. Hoar, presently CINCCENT, then Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Policies, and Operations, HQMC:

One lesson we've already learned from Desert Storm is this: the value of the Maritime Prepositioning Ship program is that it is a force multiplier. It can move quickly and quietly to the objective area at a minimum cost in airlift. We think it worked out extraordinarily well.²

Nevertheless, it was not a MPS he asked for to meet the national security strategy requirement for an "enhanced naval presence" in

the Middle East after the war. It was a forward-deployed MEU on Navy ships. He understood the threat, mission, requirements, capabilities and limitations of the forces, and things he needed to accomplish the mission. Furthermore, he placed them in the proper order in his planning.

Which comes first, the CSSE/NSE or the GCE/ACE? The loggies or the gunfighters? That of course depends on the threat. MPF doctrine assumes a benign environment and a secure area. That was not the case in Saudi Arabian ports and airfields in August, when the threat of an Iraqi attack in Eastern Saudi Arabia was believed to be imminent. The MPS offload areas are lucrative targets, and must be secured, despite doctrine. During Desert Shield, Arrival and Assembly Area (AAA) and defensive operations occurred simultaneously, and security in the ports was marginal. Restrictive Rules of Engagement imposed by the host nation further compounded the issue. The Crisis Action System (CAS) was delayed, and procrastination caused late deployment of the Offload Preparation Party (OPP) and the Survey, Liaison, and Reconnaissance Party (SLRP). The defensive concerns of the 7th MEB caused them to deploy their GCE prior to their CSSE. Upon arrival in country, the 7th MEB staff was integrated into the I MEF command element (CE), which left offload and throughput operations in the lurch. There was a shortage of qualified CSSE personnel, and the Movement Control Center (MCC), Container Management Center (CMC), and Container Operations Terminal (COT) were not functional. The decision to put shooters in first

crippled the throughput and distribution operations, stymied supply operations which took two months to recover, and impaired operational readiness.³

In our zest to pronounce the operation a success, we may also be overlooking serious pitfalls of offloading such commercial ships directly into a potential combat zone, where combat unit commanders can shatter normal offload/assembly processes by shanghaiing equipment and by other acts of panic or combat exigency. Early introduction of service troops, not combat troops, is the key to theater buildup. The thin line protecting the Saudi frontier did not afford, apparently, the measure of security necessary for a proper beginning.⁴

Shipboard security was marginal as well. Security forces were not properly identified, sourced, or task-organized. Light Anti-Air Defense assets (Stinger Missiles) were not employed enroute.

The two-ship ARG/MAGTF/MPS mix in the Persian Gulf will be compelled to assign logistics elements of the force to the Fly-In Echelon (FIE) for the same reasons the 7th MEB landed the GCE first - security and protection of the force. But in so doing they will encounter the same throughput and distribution problems that 7th MEB had, and reduce their operational readiness. In addition, space limitations will inevitably dictate that some shooters also remain behind with the FIE. Elements of the GCE may have to provide security for the MPS enroute, further diminishing the GCE. It took an entire battalion to secure the port of Al Jubayl during Desert Shield. The MEU cannot provide for its own security and plan and conduct operations without

help. While CAMs and DFMs will improve force closure and ready to operate times, they will not solve the problem.

The United States' diplomatic efforts to obtain an invitation from the Saudi government prior to Desert Shield were herculean. Ironically, King Faud's reluctant invitation during Secretary Cheney's visit were predicated on the use of overwhelming force. In fact, the MPSRON-2 ships were not moved closer to the Persian Gulf in mid-July 1990, where they could have shortened response time, for political reasons. Qatar, a member of the coalition, refused to allow the U.S. to use its airfields for political reasons. Those political realities remain in the region, and in the wake of the war, Saudi Arabia and the other members of the coalition face the censure of the Arab world. Future military operations will be conducted with the same, or greater, political restraints than those that existed during Desert Shield/Storm. Those restraints, in combination with the security of the MPSs, press for late introduction of the MPS in the AOR, especially if there exists any doubt about the security of the area.

The validation and success of the MPF concept during Desert Shield/Storm does not tolerate future abuse or maldeployment of MPFs, nor does it remove the need for an amphibious capability in the future. Current doctrine has to be reconciled with geostrategic political realities as reflected in Figure 2. In Desert Shield/Storm, naval forces were the enabling forces for the execution of force sequencing. The deployment option chosen

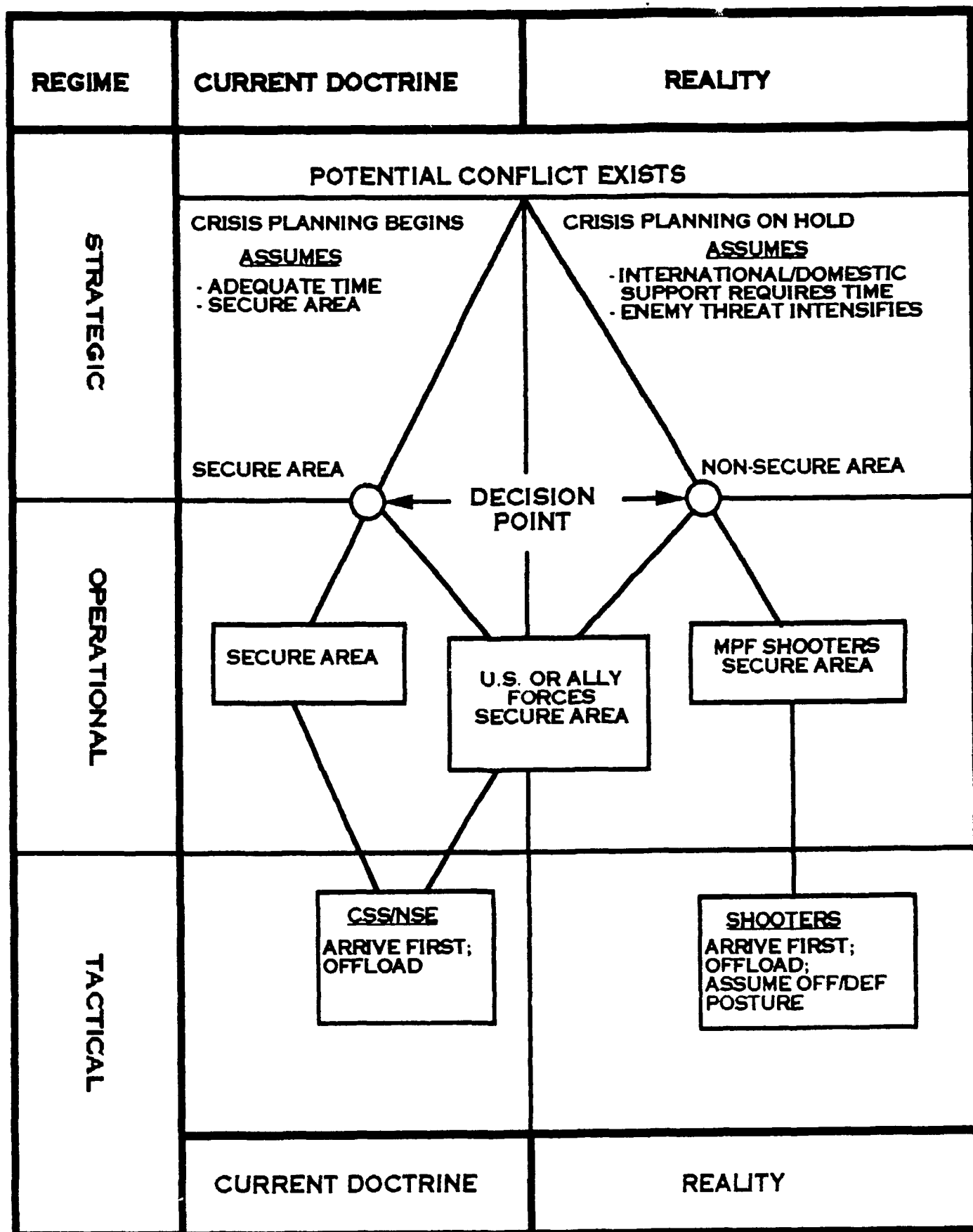


FIGURE 2

in the near term in the Middle East makes the covering force less enabling and negates rather than enhances force sequencing.

The United States Navy stressed that the forces that were on station in the Persian Gulf on 2 August 1991 were

self-sufficient and combat ready, capable of remaining on station for months independent of infrastructure ashore. The unique character of naval forces gave President Bush and his advisors a number of immediate options for responding to the crisis: ready forces to operate from over the horizon, independent of politically sensitive operating bases ashore.⁵

Lessons Not Learned

The coalition miraculously held; the host-nation support was remarkable. The Saudi airfield and port facilities were modern. We had more than five months to prepare for the war, and incredibly, our force buildup in Saudi Arabia was unimpeded by enemy attack. We did not learn how to buildup and fight at the same time. We did not learn how to defend against terrorists in a benign AOR with restrictive ROE. The chances of deploying to the Middle Eastern theater in the future under similar circumstances is remote at best.

What we did not learn [during Desert Shield/Storm] was how to engage in a combat scenario without any significant preparation time or how to engage in an operation where you did not have a large indigenous infrastructure to depend upon for support . . . Chemical weapons also were not a factor.⁶

Who knows why Saddam Hussein failed to attack U.S. and allied forces during their most vulnerable days in August? Or why he failed to unleash a chemical scourge on the port and

airfield facilities? If he didn't learn from his mistakes, others in the region and the world did.

While Operation Desert Storm has immense potential as a learning tool for the U.S. military, it should also be remembered that it offers other potential opponents a valuable object lesson as well. 'Historically, the people who win usually don't learn nearly as much as the people who lost or the people who watched.'⁷

CHAPTER VII

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

It may be laid down as a principle that any movement is dangerous which is so extended as to give the enemy an opportunity, while it is taking place, of beating the remainder of the army in position.

Jomimi

Recommendations

The combination of the ARG/MAGTF/MPS, in the short term, will threaten long-term amphibious flexibility to the extent that it is successful. The day it fails to work because it is not tailored to the threat and mission, but to "things" and the "numbers of things," limited by self-imposed constraints, it may be too late. We should not take the first step down this road for the wrong reasons. There are other alternatives that are better.

The Navy/Marine Corps Team must work together to be as efficient and effective as they can possibly be, and stop acting and playing like Steinbrenner's Yankees. The Yankees had great talent, but did not get on well, and they lost games. They must think operationally as well as strategically. They must balance Mahan and Corbett: sea control and power projection. They should consider replacing Marine Detachments on carriers with SPMAGTFs, and increasing the number of large amphibious platforms and over-the-horizon capabilities, to maintain the nation's future amphibious/expeditionary flexibility. They should form Amphibious or Expeditionary Strike Groups and pool Navy-Marine

Corps assets for the accomplishment of the mission. They should not feel threatened by other services' complementary capabilities, but actively seek to incorporate them into their operations. The Army, for example, in the present proposal, could be inserted to secure the airfield/port if the threat warranted, leaving the Marines free to accomplish their primary mission.

Decisions regarding deployment/employment of military force should be in consonance with the National Security and Military Strategies. Plans should be developed based on the threat, the mission, the requirements of the mission, and the capabilities and limitations of the force. Then, and only then, should we haggle over "things" and the "numbers of things," and we should get what we require to accomplish the mission, without self-imposed artificial constraints. Procurement decisions in the present cannot be made in a vacuum, isolated from future operational needs. When they are, CINCs must act decisively in accordance with doctrine to exact a rational calculus aligned with the needs of the Nation in the changing world of war.

Aggressive and realistic combined and joint exercises must be conducted in which all aspects of ARG/MAGTF/MPS are tested and honed. The complexity of the operations and the criticality of time and space in their execution demand practice. Practice makes permanent. The exercises will be central to future U.S. presence in the Middle East.

The Memorandum of Agreement between the Navy and the Marine Corps concerning the concept of operations for maritime prepositioning must be updated to conform to current doctrine and practice. Particular emphasis should be paid to the circumstances under which the forces are appropriate or inappropriate for use.

MAGTF doctrine should be revised to reflect the specific capabilities and limitations of the Special Purpose MAGTF. Using a company as the GCE, the force could be built into a number of LIC CAMs and DFMs which would permit a more solid basis for the CINCs to choose the proper force for contingencies.

Conclusions

The CNO's proposal, even in the short term, sets a dangerous precedent. The proposal itself implies confusion about the capabilities and limitations of the MPF and amphibious forces. The proposed mix is inconsistent with the National Security and Military Strategies and MPF/MAGTF doctrine. The choice of mix is an illustration of an imbalance of imperatives where organizational necessity overcomes rational calculus; that is, "things" and the "numbers of things," and anxiety over roles and missions becomes paramount in the decision-making process. National interests, the threat, mission, requirements, and capabilities and limitations of the force are secondary. Deployment becomes an end in and of itself without regard for the appropriateness of the MPF option.

Strategy places conditions on the conduct of military operations - in this case constraints that obligate the commander to certain military courses of action (like having to take an airfield/port because of the choice of a deployment option). The decision, at once, applies too rigorous a logic, in the form of self-imposed constraints, and too flexible an application of force, in the form of ARG/MAGTF/MPF mix.

Strategy provides resources for military operations. When resources are insufficient, the operational commander must seek additional resources or request modification of the aims.¹

Since the decision is based on numbers of platforms, we will be forced to change the aims to fit the force rather than tailoring the force to accomplish the aims.

The operational commander's principal task is to determine and pursue the sequence of actions which will most directly serve that aim . . . while required to pursue the established aim, he is obliged to communicate the associated risks.²

The operational level of war governs: deployment of forces, commitment to or withdrawal from combat, and sequencing. In seeking strategic agility, we have removed the choice of a deployment option and the choice of whether or not to fight. We have stood sequencing on its head and diminished the enabling capacity of the force to a point where our quest for strategic agility threatens to render us operationally inert. The strategy is inimical to shaping the battle in time and space. The constraints do not permit the choice of the sequence of actions

which "most directly" serve the policy aims. The risks associated with the option can be traced to the window of time between the introduction of the force forward-deployed and the arrival of the FIE. It is precisely during that shadow of time that the force is not up to full strength and does not possess the capabilities of the force that will exist after the linkup. If an enemy attack coincides with that shadow of time, and we bank on the capabilities of a MEU, but we have a SPMAGTF, the risk to the force is great and the mission in jeopardy.

We need naval forces that are 'out front,' influencing, deterring, and resolving minor crises. If they heat up, those same forces can then support and enable our joint contingency forces to deploy, and can play a substantive part in the fight, as well.³

In the worst case scenario, we will have to demand victory from our Marines rather than from the situation as Sun Tzu recommended. Operations will have failed to serve tactics by creating advantageous conditions for our tactical actions and depriving ourselves freedom of action.⁴ We have subjected ourselves unnecessarily to reconciling the time-oriented phasing of resources with the event-oriented phasing of operations.⁵ Protection of the force and mission hang in the balance. In the near term, the two-ship ARG will probably work, but the cost of failure for the future is not worth the risk. The proposal is feasible, but unsuitable and unacceptable.

It is much easier for strategic incompetence to squander operational and tactical success than it is for tactical and

operational brilliance to completely overcome strategic incompetence or disadvantage.⁶

Overwhelming force was one of the strategic concepts associated with the National Military Strategy.

Once a decision for major military action has been made, half measures and confused objectives extract a severe price in the form of a protracted conflict which can cause needless waste of human and material resources, a divided nation at home, and defeat. Therefore, one of the essential elements of our national military strategy is the ability to rapidly assemble the forces needed to win - the concept of applying overwhelming force to terminate conflicts swiftly, decisively, and with a minimum loss of life.⁷

Why then, even in the short term, introduce a force combination that divides the force thereby decreasing its capabilities, and takes away the autonomy of the ARG/MAGTF? A choice should be made to disregard ops/pers tempo and operate, or tell the CINC he can not have what he said he needs and take the accompanying increased risk in the region; but don't give him half of what he needs and pretend it is the whole thing or the emperor may end up with no clothes. Let us not attempt to define the outer edge of the envelope of presence, deterrence, and flexibility with Marines' and Sailors' lives like we did in Beirut. Lives are more important than things.

APPENDIX A

THE THREAT

MISSILES

I. Algeria - Frog 4/7 Missile

- A. Source: USSR
- B. Status: in service
- C. Launchers: 20
- D. Range: 70 km

II. Egypt

- A. Missile: Sakr-80
 - 1. Source: Egypt
 - 2. Status: entering service
 - 3. Launchers: ?
 - 4. Range: 80 km
 - 5. Comments: Frog-7 replacement developed in Egypt, probably with assistance from Western Europe.
- B. Missile: Condor-3
 - 1. Source: Argentina/Egypt
 - 2. Status: under development
 - 3. Launchers: ?
 - 4. Range: 800 km
 - 5. Comments: Argentina is developing this missile with economic assistance from Egypt and Iraq; Egypt may have test fired a missile in 1987.
- C. Missile: Scud-B
 - 1. Source: USSR/Egypt/N. Korea
 - 2. Status: in production
 - 3. Launchers: 9
 - 4. Range: 280 km
 - 5. Comments: Scud-Bs originally obtained from the Soviet Union in 1973; Egypt is now working with N. Korea to produce the Scud-B.
- D. Missile: Frog-7
 - 1. Source: USSR
 - 2. Status: in service
 - 3. Launchers: 12
 - 4. Range: 70 km
 - 5. Comments: To be replaced by the Sakr-80.

III. Iran

- A. Missile: Oghab
 - 1. Source: China/Iran
 - 2. Status: in service
 - 3. Launchers: ?
 - 4. Range: 40 km
 - 5. Comments: Originally obtained from China in 1986, the Iranians have fired at least 350 since Dec. 1986; probably now under production in Iran.
- B. Missile: Scud-B
 - 1. Source: Lybia/Syria?/N. Korea/Iran?

2. Status: in service
 3. Launchers: 3?
 4. Range: 280 km
 5. Comments: Iran claims it is now producing the Scud-B.
- C. Missile: 130 km
1. Source: Iran
 2. Status: under development?
 3. Launchers: ?
 4. Range: 130 km
 5. Comments: May be in final stages of development.
- IV. Iraq
- A. Missile: al-Husayn
1. Source: Iraq/Egypt/E. Germany/N. Korea?
 2. Status: in service
 3. Launchers: 6?
 4. Range: 650 km
 5. Comments: Test fired in August 1987; About 190 were fired at Iran during March-April 1988; Developed with assistance from Egypt, E. Germany, and N. Korea.
- B. Missile: al-Abbas
1. Source: Iraq+?
 2. Status: entering service
 3. Launchers: ?
 4. Range: 900 km
 5. Comments: A further enhancement of the al-Husayn test fired in April 1988.
- C. Missile: Scud-B
1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service
 3. Launchers: 20 km
 4. Range: 280 km
- D. Missile: Frog-7
1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service
 3. Launchers: 30 km
 4. Range: 70 km
- E. Missile: SS-12
1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service?
 3. Launchers: ?
 4. Range: 900 km
 5. Comments: Reportedly delivered in 1984; some may have been fired in early 1988.
- F. Missile: SS-21
1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service?
 3. Launchers: ?
 4. Range: 100 km
 5. Reportedly delivered, not confirmed.

V. Israel

- A. Missile: Jericho
 - 1. Source: Israel
 - 2. Status: in service
 - 3. Launchers: ?
 - 4. Range: 1,000+ km
 - 5. Comments: Supplied in the late 1970s.
- B. Missile: Lance
 - 1. Source: USA
 - 2. Status: in service
 - 3. Launchers: 12
 - 4. Range: 100 km
 - 5. Comments: Supplied in the late 1970s.
- C. Missile: MAR-290
 - 1. Source: Israel
 - 2. Status: in service
 - 3. Launchers: ?
 - 4. Range: 40 km
 - 5. Comments: Supplied in the late 1970s.

VI. Kuwait - Frog-7 Missile

- A. Source: USSR
- B. Status: in service
- C. Launchers: 4
- D. Range: 70 km
- E. Comments: Supplied in 1981.

VII. Libya

- A. Missile: Frog-7
 - 1. Source: USSR
 - 2. Status: in service
 - 3. Launchers: 48
 - 4. Range: 70 km
- B. Missile: Scud-B
 - 1. Source: USSR
 - 2. Status: in service
 - 3. Launchers: 80
 - 4. Range: 280 km
- C. Missile: OTRAG
 - 1. Source: Libya/W. Germany
 - 2. Status: under development
 - 3. Launchers: -
 - 4. Range: ?
 - 5. Comments: In early 1980s, German firm OTRAG permitted to use launch facilities at Sebha in southern Libya. Reportedly, Libya was to receive a ballistic missile system. Although the arrangement with OTRAG fell apart, individuals associated with the organization remained in Libya. According to one account, a missile production facility has been completed.
- D. Missile: MB/EE

1. Source: Brazil
2. Status: under development
3. Launchers: -
4. Range: up to 1,000 km
5. Comments: Libya reportedly has agreed to fund development of a family of ballistic missiles in Brazil.

VIII. Saudi Arabia - DF-3A Missile

- A. Source: China
- B. Status: entering service
- C. Launchers: ?
- D. Range: under 3,000 km
- E. Comments: An estimated 25-50 missiles have been supplied.

IX. Syria

- A. Missile: SS-21
 1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service
 3. Launchers: 12
 4. Range: 100 km
- B. Missile: Scud-B
 1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service
 3. Launchers: 18
 4. Range: 280 km
- C. Missile: Frog-7
 1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service
 3. Launchers: 24
 4. Range: 70 km
- D. Missile: M-series
 1. Source: China
 2. Status: under negotiation
 3. Launchers: -
 4. Range: ?
 5. Comments: Syria is reportedly talking to China about obtaining the M-series missiles. The first of the M family to be revealed by the Chinese was shown in 1986, and it was reported to have a 200-600 km range. In early 1988, the M11 was revealed; it has a 120-150 km range, although some sources put the figure at 290 km.

X. South Yemen

- A. Missile: Frog-7
 1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service
 3. Launchers: 12
 4. Range: 70 km
- B. Missile: Scud-B

1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service
 3. Launchers: 6
 4. Range: 280 km
- C. Missile: SS-21
1. Source: USSR
 2. Status: in service?
 3. Launchers: ?
 4. Range: 100 km
 5. Comments: Reportedly identified in a recent parade.

CHEMICAL/BIOLOGICAL CAPABILITIES

I. Egypt

- A. **Chemical.** Acquired an ability to use chemical agents in the early 1960s. By 1973 it was producing weapons. Efforts to enhance operational capabilities continued after that and it still produces chemical agents.
- B. **Biological/Toxins.** By the early 1970s, a rudimentary biological warfare capability was in place.
- C. **Use.** North Yemen (1963-1967): Chemical agents were used against Royalist forces during Egypt's intervention in North Yemen.

II. Iran

- A. **Chemical.** Initiated development of a chemical warfare program in response to Iraq's use during the Gulf War. It is working to expand its ability to manufacture agents.
- B. **Biological/Toxins.** Appears to be developing biological agents in response to Iraq's program.
- C. **Use.** Gulf War (1987-1988): It appears that by 1987 the Iranians were employing small quantities of chemical agents, possibly captured from the Iraqis.

III. Iraq

- A. **Chemical.** Initiated efforts to manufacture chemical agents in the mid-1970s, and achieved a production capability in the early 1980s. It has the capacity to make 1,000 tons of chemical agents per year.
- B. **Biological/Toxins.** Believed to have an operational biological warfare capability. It probably has a program to make toxins and should be assumed that it is researching advanced biological agents.

- C. **Use.** Gulf War (1983-1988): According to the Iranians, as many as 45,000 Kurds and Iranians were killed or injured by Iraqi use of chemical agents, the most extensive use of them since the First World War.

IV. Israel

- A. **Chemical.** A chemical program was started in the 1960s in response to Egypt's use of chemical agents in North Yemen. By 1973, it had an operational capability. Currently, it has mustard gas and is producing nerve agents.
- B. **Biological/Toxins.** No known biological warfare capability, but is generally presumed capable of developing one in a short period of time.
- C. **Use.** Israel has never used chemical agents.

V. Libya

- A. **Chemical.** Obtained chemical agents in 1987, apparently from Iran. Construction of a large chemical manufacturing facility is nearing completion.
- B. **Biological/Toxins.** No known capability.
- C. **Use.** Chad (1987): It used chemical agents against Chadian military forces at least once.

VI. Syria

- A. **Chemical.** Received its first chemical agents from Egypt just before the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Currently manufactures nerve agents and other chemicals. It possesses chemical warheads for its SCUD B ballistic missiles.
- B. **Biological/Toxins.** Believed to possess an operational biological warfare capability. It may be researching advanced biological agents and toxins.
- C. **Use.** Syria used chemical agents against its own people in the village of Hama.

Source: Carus, Seth W. "Missiles in the Middle East: A New Threat to Stability," Policy Focus June 1988 and Carus, Seth W. "Chemical Weapons in the Middle East," Policy Focus December 1988.

APPENDIX B

LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT

1. Insurgency/Counterinsurgency
 - (1) Advisory/Training
 - (2) Intelligence Support
 - (3) Logistics Support
 - (4) Civil-Military Operations
 - (5) Humanitarian Assistance
 - (6) Tactical Operations
2. Combatting Terrorism
 - (1) Intelligence
 - (2) Security
 - (3) Hostage Negotiation/Rescue
 - (4) Assault Terrorist Positions
3. Peacekeeping
 - A. Roles
 - (1) Support
 - (2) Observers
 - (3) Peacekeeping Forces
 - B. Missions
 - (1) Supervision of Free Territories, of Cease Fires, Withdrawl/Disengagement, POW Exchange, Demilitarization and Demobilization
 - (2) Maintain Law and Order
4. Peacetime Contingencies
 - A. Roles
 - (1) Disaster Relief
 - (2) Show of Force
 - (3) Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO)
 - (4) Rescue/Recovery
 - (5) Strike/Raid
 - (6) Protect SLOCs
 - (7) Peacemaking
 - (8) Security Assistance Surges
 - (9) Support U.S. Civil Authorities
 - B. Missions
 - (1) Airborne Assault
 - (2) Amphibious Operations
 - (3) Air Strike
 - (4) Airlift
 - (5) Convoy Operations
 - (6) Naval Blockade or Quarantine

Source: Doctrine for Joint Operations in LIC, (Draft) JCS
(Washington: US Government Printing Office, May, 1989).

APPENDIX C

MEU(SOC) MISSION, CAPABILITIES, AND LIMITATIONS

MISSIONS/CAPABILITIES

- * Amphibious Raids
- * Ship Reinforcement/Recovery/Interdiction Operations*
- * Gas/Oil Platform Seizure/Disable (GOPLAT)*
- * Tactical Recovery of A/C and Personnel (TRAP)*
- * In-extremis Hostage Rescue (IHR)*
- * Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO)
- * Limited Objective Operations
- * Show of Force Operations
- * Reinforcement Operations
- * Security Operations
- * Deception Operations
- * Counterintelligence Operations
- * Civil Affairs Operations
- * Clandestine Recovery Operations
- * Mobile Training Teams (MTTs)

LIMITATIONS

- * Defensive Capability Against Armored/Motorized Units in Open Terrain
 - * Anti-air Defense Capability Against a Sustained Low-Altitude Air Attack When Operating Independent of Naval Air Support
 - * Reconstitution and Retraining Ability to Replace Combat Losses When the Early Introduction of Subsequent Forces is Not Contemplated
 - * Special Warfare Capability Requiring Mobile Training Teams (MTT) or Nation-building Efforts. MEU(SOC) Can Provide Limited Entry Level or Reinforcement Training. Nation-Building Efforts are Limited to Supporting Humanitarian and Civic Action Programs Sponsored and Supported by the CINCs or Fleet Commanders.
 - * Capability for Psychological Operations
 - * Prolonged Capability to Combat Terrorism
- * Following the Mission/Capability = Maritime Special Purpose Force (MSPF) Missions

Source: Operational Policy for Marine Air-Ground Task Force (Special Operations Capable) MCO P3000.16 Draft. 18 June 1991.

APPENDIX D

MARITIME PREPOSITIONING FORCES

CAPABILITIES

- * Mobility and Flexibility to Concentrate Forces Quickly in an AOR
- * Presence/Deterrence
- * Conserve Critical Strategic Airlift
- * Alternative Form of Power Projection When Early Decision, Secure Situation, and Deployment Capabilities Permit
- * Economy of Force Measure in a Secure AOR to Preclude the Requirement for Forcible Entry
- * Means to Deploy a MAGTF with Minimal Impact on Other Deployed Forces Given an Early Decision and Secure Area
- * Rapidly Reinforce a Forward-Deployed MAGTF Using the Speed of Airlift and the Lift Capacity and Rapid Response of Prepositioned Sealift
- * Preemptively Occupy/Defend LOCs
- * Support an Ally Prior to Hostilities
- * Provide a Secure Area for Follow On Forces
- * Reinforce an Amphibious Operation (Previously Secured Beach)
- * Occupy/Reinforce Advanced Naval Bases
- * Establish a Force in Support of Sustained Operations Ashore

LIMITATIONS

- * **LACK OF A FORCIBLE ENTRY CAPABILITY**
- * Need for a Secure Area From Initiation of Strategic Deployment Through Completion of Arrival and Assembly
- * Fixed Set of Equipment and Supplies Aboard the MPSRON (Although the CAMs, DFMs, and MAGTF II/Logistics Automated System (LOGAIS) Increased Force Closure and Ready to Operate Times, Flexibility, and Sustainability of the MPFs, the Limitation Remains)
- * Extreme Complexity/Lack of Simplicity
- * Division of the Force
- * Interdependence of the Elements of the Force
- * Limited or No Selected Offload
- * Time Critical and Space Intensive
- * Requires Heavy Support in AOR Prior to Arrival of GCE/ACE
- * Requires Adequate Road Network Between Port/AF/Beach
- * Conflicting Demands of Deployment/Employment
- * Escalatory in Nature
- * Forces Decision Makers to Commit to Deployment Options Early, Before Employment Requirements are Known
- * MPSS Vulnerable to Attack

- * Not Enough MPSs - Simultaneous Crises Will Stress System Causing Competition for Limited Strategic Sealift and

Airlift Assets

- * Subject to Unwanted Involvement
- * Reliant on Host Nation Invitation and Support, Overflight and Access Rights, etc., etc., etc.
- * Reduces Diplomatic Options
- * Loss of Calculated Ambiguity of Intent
- * Loss of Reversability After FIE
- * Potential Political Costs
- * Subject to the Availability of Beaches, Ports, Airfields With the Space, Infrastructure, and Capability to Expedite Offload and Throughput Operations

Source: Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) Operations OH 1-5, Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command Quantico, VA: August, 1990).

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